APPENDIX D

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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HISTORY

The project area is located within territory occupied by the Gabrielino Native American group when Europeans first arrived in the region (Chambers, August 2000). Gabrielino settlement and subsistence patterns may extend back to the beginning of the late Prehistoric period, about A.D. 750. The Gabrielino were semi-sedentary hunters and gatherers.

Coastal groups collected shellfish and fished for estuary, nearshore, and kelp bed species. Dried fish and shellfish were exchanged for inland products such as acorns. The nuts were pounded into flour using stone mortars and pestles and then cooked as soup or gruel. Seeds from sage, grasses, goosefoot, and buckwheat were ground with stone manos and metates. Deer, rabbits, birds, and marine mammals were hunted with bow and arrow, nets, traps, and snares.

The Gabrielino lived in villages of up to 150 people located near permanent water sources and a variety of food resources (Chambers, August 2000). The village acted as the center of a territory from which resources were gathered. Small groups left the village for short periods to hunt, fish, and gather plant foods, as well as collect raw materials for tools, housing, and other utilitarian needs.

The period from 1000 B.C. to A.D. 750 is known as the Intermediate Period (Chambers, August 2000). During this period, mortars and pestles appear, indicating the beginning of acorn exploitation. Use of the acorn - a high-calorie, storable food source - probably allowed greater sedentism and a higher level of social organization. Large projectile points indicate that the bow and arrow, a hallmark of the Late Prehistoric Period, had not yet been introduced, and hunting was likely accomplished using the *atlatl* (spear thrower) instead. Settlement patterns during this time are not well understood. The semi-sedentary settlement pattern characteristic of the Late Prehistoric Period may have begun during the Intermediate Period, although lower population densities may have limited local territoriality.

The Milling Stone Period (about 6500 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) represents a long period of time characterized by smaller, more mobile groups, compared with later periods. These groups probably relied on a seasonal round of settlement, which included both inland and coastal residential bases (Chambers, August 2000). Seeds from sage and grasses, rather than acorns, provided calories and carbohydrates.

Although the Spanish inaugurated their system of missions in *Alta California* in 1769, the first Spanish explorers in this region visited the coastline much earlier (Chambers, August 2000). Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo arrived first in 1542, followed by Pedro de Unamuno in 1587, Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeño in 1595, and Sebastian Vizcaíno in 1602. After Vizcaíno's visit, 167 years passed without European exploration of the *Alta California* coastline until the first mission, at San Diego, was founded on the heels

of the Gaspar de Portolá land expedition in 1769 (Chambers, August 2000). Native American inhabitants of the Los Angeles Basin were taken to Mission San Gabriel, constructed in 1771 (Chambers, August 2000), and were called *Gabrielinos* by the Spanish because of their association with the mission.

The Spanish government made several large land grants in the Los Angeles Basin, but much of the land was not granted until Mexico gained independence in 1822 and the mission holdings were secularized in 1834. The current project area is located near the historic boundary between two Mexican ranchos: the 22,459-acre Sausal Redondo grant of 1837, and the 13,920-acre Ba1lona grant of 1839 (Chambers, August 2000). The Ba1lona rancho may have carried over from an earlier Spanish grant (Chambers, August 2000), with the name derived from the claimants' home city of Bayona in northern Spain (Chambers, August 2000). The smaller 2,219-acre Aguaje de la Centinela grant of 1844 (Chambers, August 2000) was situated just east of the project area.

During the Mexican administration of *Alta California*, the early pueblo of Los Angeles was located in the area west of the present Union Station downtown (Chambers, August 2000). The rest of the surrounding lands were divided into ranchos largely devoted to livestock and cultivation. California became an American state in 1850, but the population of southern California remained relatively low through the 1860s and 1870s, with cattle ranching continuing as the principal economic activity. However, a period of drought and expensive land title defense cases in U.S. courts resulted in the sale of many of the cattle ranches to Anglo-Americans.

Immigration to southern California increased substantially after Los Angeles was connected by the Southern Pacific Railroad to the transcontinental Central Pacific Railroad in San Francisco in 1876 (Chambers, August 2000). The Southern Pacific Railroad completed its own transcontinental connection from Los Angeles through Yuma in 1881 (Chambers, August 2000). During the 1880s, towns were hastily formed and land was sold to new arrivals from the east by real estate developers. Land speculation escalated as the second transcontinental railroad, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe, reached Los Angeles in 1886. The two railroads vied for customers by waging a fare war, encouraging many people to move to southern California.

The original Ba1lona Lagoon (now Marina del Rey) was proposed several times as the location of a commercial port facility for Los Angeles (Chambers, August 2000). With backing from the Santa Fe Railroad, Moses L. Wickes made the first proposal in 1886, investing $300,000 in the "La Ba1lona" project (Chambers, August 2000). The attempt failed, but the idea was revived under the name Playa del Rey in 1902 (Chambers, August 2000). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers studied the lagoon in 1916, but concluded that its development as a commercial harbor was not feasible. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors commissioned another study in 1936, but later decided to concentrate all commercial port facilities at Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbors. During the late 1940s, the Corps of Engineers initiated a feasibility study for a recreational boat harbor at the lagoon. The Marina del Rey harbor and channel were created by dredging the lagoon, but the marina and associated breakwater were not completed until 1965 (Chambers, August 2000).

The first producing well in the Playa del Rey gas storage field was completed in 1929. By 1930, the field contained 141 producing wells. During 1934 and 1935, 50 additional wells were drilled in the Del Rey Hills area. During World War II, the federal government assumed control of the field. The Southern

California Gas (SCG) Company began operations after acquiring the field in 1953 as surplus government property (Chambers, August 2000). Since that time, parcels not occupied by gas wells have been developed as residential properties.

Three historic resources located within one mile of the Marina del Rey / Venice portion of the project area are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Venice Canal Historic District, Warren Wilson Beach House, and American Trona Corporation building (Chambers, August 2000). All three are located north of and beyond the project area. The Venice Canals were created in 1905 as part of a unique residential subdivision. The Venice Canal System is also listed as City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument No. 270. The Warren Wilson Beach House is also located in Venice. The American Trona building was constructed in 1916 as a storage facility for raw salt.

Twelve additional historic resources are located within one mile of the overall project area, including a streetcar depot and 11 residential structures (Chambers, August 2000). None of these resources have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. None occur within boundaries of the project area.

There are no California Historical Landmarks or California Points of Historical Interest listed within a one-mile radius of the overall project area (Chambers, August 2000). One of the prehistoric archaeological sites located within a one-mile radius of the project area, CA-LAN-47, is also listed as City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument No. 490, the site of the Gabrielino village of *Sa-Angna*.

ARCHEOLOGICAL

The Gabrielino lived in villages of up to 150 people located near permanent water sources and a variety of food resources (Chambers, August 2000). While away from the village, they established temporary camps and resource processing locations (Chambers, August 2000). Archaeologically, such locations are marked by bedrock mortars for acorn processing, manos and metates for seed grinding, and flaked lithic scatters indicating the manufacturing or maintenance of stone tools (usually of chert) used in hunting or butchering. Overnight stays in these field camps are indicated by fire-affected rock resulting from use in hearths (Chambers, August 2000).

The period from 1000 B.C. to A.D. 750 is known archaeologically as the Intermediate Period (Chambers, August 2000). During this period, mortars and pestles appear, indicating the beginning of acorn exploitation.

The Milling Stone Period (about 6500 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) represents a long period of time characterized by smaller, more mobile groups, compared with later periods. Although fewer projectile points occur (compared with later periods), faunal remains indicate that similar animals were hunted. Inland Milling Stone Period sites are characterized by numerous llanos, metates, and hammerstones, while shell middens are common at coastal sites. Coarse-grained lithic materials, such as quartzite and rhyolite, are more common than fine-grained materials, such as chert, in flaked stone tools from this time.

BALLONA WETLANDS PREHISTORY

Recent studies of landscape evolution in the Ballona Wetlands area of Southern California has revealed more detailed settlement information unique to the Westchester Bluffs. Homburg et al. (2001) conducted geoarchaeological analysis though extensive augering to reconstruct the succession of landforms and their effect on human occupation. Three distinct cultural adaptations were identified as they related to a particular stage of landscape and lagoonal development over the last 7,000 years:

1) Early Period (7,000-3,000 B.P.) marked by short-term, bluff-top occupations overlooking a shallow bay or lagoon;

2) Middle period (3,000-1,000 B.P.), characterized by an influx of population distributed on bluff-top and creek-edge settings; and

3) Late period (1,000-200 B.P.), marked by population aggregation around the lagoon.

Estuarine conditions prevailed at the present-day Ballona Wetlands until the lagoon development began around 6,200 B.P., when the lagoon began to slowly fill with alluvium up to around 2,000 B.P. As a result, human settlement tended to move westward through time; initial occupation began on the Baldwin Hills, shifted in the Middle Period to the Westchester Bluffs, and ended with large settlements at the mouth of Centinela Creek and the Ballona Lagoon (Homburg et al. 2001).

ARCHIVAL METHODS

A records search of all pertinent survey and site data was conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center, Fullerton, California. The records were accessed by utilizing the Venice, Calif. USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map, unsectioned, Township 2S, Range 15W. The review included the Playa Del Rey and Marina Del Rey sites along with a ¼ mile buffer that constituted the Project Area. Previous surveys and studies and archaeological site records were accessed as they pertained to the Project Area. Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, the California Inventory of Historic Resources (1976), the California Historical Landmarks (1996), and the California Points of Historical Interest (1992) were searched from within the project area.

ARCHIVAL FINDINGS

Twenty-eight archaeological sites have been recorded within a one-mile radius of the project area. Of these, 23 are prehistoric archaeological sites and 6 are historic archaeological sites.

Five of the prehistoric sites are located within the boundaries of the Playa del Rey portion of the project area are identified as follows: CA-LAN-63, CA-LAN-64, CA-LAN-65, CA-LAN-203, CA-LAN-204, and CA-LAN-206. These sites are summarized below in Table D-1. All five are situated in the eastern half of this portion of the project area, between Gulana Avenue on the west and Hastings Avenue on the east. This area is located on top of the bluff that overlooks the Ballona Creek drainage to the north. The locations of the 36 parcels, which are to be sold, have been compared with the mapped locations of these five sites currently known within the project area. None of the parcels occur within known boundaries of

the five archaeological sites. Thus, sale and subsequent development of these parcels will not pose an adverse impact on any of these known resources.

No archaeological sites have been recorded within the Marina del Rey/Venice portion of the project area. Prehistoric archaeological sites are not expected within the former Ballona Lagoon and wetlands, which were dredged and filled in 1965 to form the marina.

TABLE D-1
PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES RECORDED WITHIN THE PLAYA DEL REY PORTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

SCCIC Designation	Initially Recorded	Site Type	Site Description
CA-LAN-63	06 / 05 / 50	Village Site	Ground stone artifacts; midden soils
CA-LAN-64	06 / 05 / 50	Habitation site	Ground and flaked stone artifacts and shell
CA-LAN-65	06 / 05 / 50	Habitation site	Ground and flaked stone artifacts and shell
CA-LAN-203	06 / 05 / 53	Seed processing site	Ground stone artifacts (metates)
CA-LAN-204	06 / 05 / 53	Not defined	None available
CA-LAN-206	06 / 05 / 53	Seed processing site	Ground stone artifacts (manos, metates, and cogstones)

SOURCE: Chambers, August 2000

SURVEY METHODS AND FINDINGS

The surface of each lot was examined for constituents of archaeological sites, such as artifacts, features or facilities, and/or culturally modified soil horizons. Due to the extensive built setting and landscape cover, visibility of the native surface was minimal to zero. No archaeological materials were identified during this survey.

Because the project is to be located within built environments, the utility of pedestrian archaeological survey methods is diminished due to the lack of native soil and topographic visibility. Moreover, much of Playa Del Rey and Marina Del Rey has been subjected to landfill, which has obscured the visibility of the native surface. Archaeological sites can consist of extensive subsurface components that would be difficult to localize without test excavations. Under such circumstances, construction monitoring by qualified archaeological monitors may be substituted for survey, evaluation/testing, or data recovery.

With respect to historic resources, the nature of the proposed project—that is, the sale of the lots themselves—would not directly or indirectly impact structures or properties. Consequently, no additional measures are required pertaining to built historical resources. Nevertheless, this does not preclude the existence of subsurface historical archaeology in the project area.

PALEONTOLOGIC RESOURCES

The top of the bluff comprising the Playa del Rey portion of the project area is underlain by late Quaternary dune sand (unit Qs), while the slope at the northern margin of the project area is underlain by the marine Palos Verdes Sand, which stratigraphically underlies the dune sand (Chambers, August 2000). The archives of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Vertebrate Paleontology Section (LACMVP) indicate that no fossils have been reported from the dune sand anywhere within the USGS Venice 7.5' Quadrangle. Moreover, no vertebrate fossil site is reported as occurring in the dune sand (Chambers, August 2000). The lack of any previously recorded fossil site suggests that there is only a low potential for late Pleistocene fossil remains occurring in the project area where underlain by dune sand.

However, several previously recorded fossil sites do occur in the Palos Verdes Sand. These include LACMVP fossil site 1024 (Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Invertebrate Paleontology Section fossil site 59) and others, which occur immediately east of the project area along the western side of Lincoln Avenue (Chambers, August 2000). These fossil sites yielded the fossilized remains of 300 species of late Pleistocene (Ice Age) shallow-water marine invertebrates, including snails and clams; the fossilized bones and teeth of marine vertebrate species, including fishes, sharks, seals, and porpoises; the fossilized bones of birds; and the fossilized bones of a land mammal species (gopher). These fossil occurrences indicate that there is a high potential for late Pleistocene fossil remains occurring along the northern margin of the Playa del Rey portion of the project area where underlain by the Palos Verdes Sand.

By contrast, little or no potential for such fossils is indicated by the geological character of the Marina del Rey/Venice portion of the project area, which is comprised of dune sand and fill materials dredged from Ballona Lagoon during construction of the marina.

HUMAN REMAINS

No human remains are known to exist on the SCG parcels.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (AS DEFINED IN §15064.5)

No areas of historical significance are known to exist on the SCG parcels.

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Federal legislation requires that federal agencies consider environmental effects to historical and cultural resources prior to authorizing any activity. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) specify that environmental evaluations of proposed projects consider historic and cultural resource effects. This review process is referred to as Section 106 review. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) is responsible for administering the Section 106 review process. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) provides

a method for preserving and maintaining cultural resources that meet certain eligibility criteria. In 1971, the President's Executive Order No. 11593 required that all federal agencies initiate procedures to preserve and maintain cultural resources.

STATE

State legislation requires the protection of historical and cultural resources. In 1980, the Governor's Executive Order No. B-64-80 required that state agencies inventory all "significant historic and cultural sites, structures, and objects under their jurisdiction which are over 50 years of age and which may qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places."

California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines §15064.5 are used to determine the significance of impacts to archeological and historical resources. The guidelines state that a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.

The *Westchester-Playa del Rey Plan*, which is part of the *General Plan of the City of Los Angeles*, contains the following provision under Cultural Heritage Resources (City of Los Angeles, June 1974):

> Review potential resource impacts through the County and City's Environmental Guidelines and require appropriate environmental documentation and reasonable mitigation measures as determined by the Department of City Planning and the State Historic Preservation Office.